

January

2019



of



WHAT'S INSIDE

*Pastor's
Message*
Page 1-2

crazies
Page 2

Music Ministry
Page 3

Birthdays
Page 4

*Mission/
Congo Life*
Pages 5

*Children's
Ministry*
Pages 6-7

Family Camp
Page 8

*Announce-
ments
& Events*
Page 9

Calendar
Page 10

*Financial
Statement*
Page 11



Pastoral Message

Pastor Allen Mothershed

Welcome Darkness

By the time you read this devotion most of us will have missed a significant day of the year which our ancestors from hundreds of years ago gave great notice. On December 21st, the earth had its maximum tilt away from the sun in the Northern hemisphere. So if you felt a shiver of cold or found darkness descending upon you earlier than you expected, you can now attribute this to the winter solstice. On this day, the nighttime lasts longer than the daytime. Sometimes, it is called midwinter because after this date the daylight slowly becomes longer than the night. In pagan times, in places such as Stonehenge, crowds awaited this day when the sunlight at dawn streamed through two vertical rocks. Later that night, people danced a welcome to the darkness around a large fire as sparks rose into the dark sky.

I also doubt many people have heard of luna spirituality, or considered the gifts of darkness in our lives. Light is the common symbol of love and goodness in our world that takes away the enemy of the darkness. Evil lurks both in the darkness and in the light. On Christmas Eve we hold up our candles and dispel the darkness and are reminded that the light is so much more powerful.

But, there is another way to think of the darkness as less our enemy and more our friend. The darkness can be a way of thinking about our dwelling in what is unknown and a mystery to us. Darkness can also be a time in our lives where we face the shadow side of ourselves, the part of our personality that we can so readily recognize in others and often condemn, while blind to it in ourselves. Extroverts can learn the value of solitude. Introverts can learn to engage and take a social risk. Those idealists who see limitless possibilities in life can learn from the pragmatist who is offering a dose of reality. Those pragmatists can learn from the idealist to dream again with less fear that it can never come true. Think of those qualities you do not like in other people and see if you can find them within yourself and the gifts they have to offer you. You may find friends in those you feared and discover in your shadow-side a vast new part of yourself to befriend.

(continued)

At Family Camp a number of years ago we were taken on a night hike into the forest without flashlights. We stumbled our way over rocks, our hands out in front of us. We nervously laughed at not being able to see. But in not so much time, we found beauty. Our eyes began to see what we had been missing. The stars grew brighter than before, some stars we saw for the first time.

Just remember one verse of scripture about God as you enter the darkness: "even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you." Psalm 139:12.

-Pastor Allen

Remembrance Sunday

On Sunday, January 13th, in worship we will read the names of those from our church who have died in the past year's time. We will also give the members an opportunity to light a candle on behalf of their own loved ones and friends who have died in the past year.



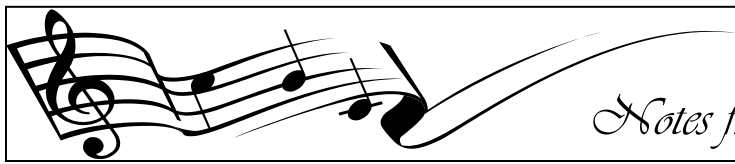
We hope this will be a healing service for those who have suffered a loss and a time once again to give God thanks for the lives of those who have touched our own.

crozies

Crazies were busy in December! We went shopping at Target for a good cause, learned about Advent, had Ugly Sweater Day, and played fun games and activities.

This month crazies will be coming back from their Christmas vacations. I would appreciate help from parents/volunteers who can sign up to provide dinner for crazies. Also, my family and I will be going to India from January 6th-13th **so we need helpers to facilitate crazies for both January 6th and 13th**. If you can help, please contact me at mel.jerome@stmatthewucc.org.

-Mel Jerome, Youth Ministry Director



Happy New Year to everyone! I truly hope that you had a very Merry Christmas. Before I look ahead, I wish to thank everyone who was involved in any way with the presentation of the cantata, *"Sing With the Angels."* It was light, fun, and conveyed the wonderful message that "Angels Are Among Us." If you missed it, you can find it on the St. Matthew website, www.stmatthewucc.org. The recording came out very well, too.



The new year holds promise and opportunities for everyone. Many of you may not be aware of the great opportunity given to our own KC Congdon. KC is a charter member of the Agape Ringers, a semi-professional handbell choir. This choir was started 25 years ago by David Weck, who directed our choir for a bit many years ago. David retired at their Christmas concert and announced that KC is their new musical director. Congratulations to KC for this honor and excellent opportunity. But don't worry, she is not giving up her directing duties here. We wish her the best!



Praise Band, Handbells, and Choir resume their normal rehearsal schedules to provide music that adds to our worship experience. The Sanctuary Choir and Praise Band are always looking for more singers. Depending on the month, the choir has an additional 1 or 2 Sundays to sing. If you are able to help for any of them, we greatly appreciate it. We work several weeks ahead, so it is not mandatory to attend every rehearsal. Please look at your schedules to see if you can join for more than just Open Choir Sundays. Come talk to me to see how we work around calendar conflicts. Anything will help.

We had a wonderful fall season of Open Choir Sing, and we are looking forward to a terrific spring season. I know several of you wanted to participate but were unable to because of conflicts. I hope you are able to join us for the following dates:

January 27th
February 24th
March 31st
April 28th
May 19th

Jamie Craig

630-202-6788

jamie.craig@stmatthewucc.org

WEEKLY REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Tuesday

IntergeneRingers

6pm

Chancel Ringers

7:30pm

Wednesday

Praise Band

6:30pm

Sanctuary Choir

7:30pm

Pennies From Heaven SCRIP (MANNA) Program

The holidays are over, but "this little piggy" still needs to go to the market. We all still need to shop for groceries and gas, so consider buying Scrip cards for the places you always shop, and bring a little extra money to St. Matthew.

SCRIP—it's not just for gift cards any more.

Check out the Scrip table in Dobstaff on Sundays!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 4 | Darcy Holland |
| 6 | Ruth Copeland |
| 9 | Bill Matthei |
| 13 | Leah Kulczewski |
| 17 | Dan Achammer
Jim Fanning |
| 18 | Bob Cooper |
| 20 | Rachel Schubert |
| 22 | Mark Hutchison |
| 28 | Brian Nessel |



Pastor Allen's schedule varies from week to week. He is in and out of the office during the day for meetings, visits, and study. Please call ahead to check his schedule or to set up an appointment. His cell phone number is 630.441.5962. He is available by phone when not in the office.

OFFICE HOURS

office@st.matthewucc.org

Monday-Thursday: 10am-2pm

Friday: 9-11am

Mission News



Food on the First

Thanks to those who donated in 2018. A very big thank you from me and those who work in the food pantries. We are most grateful!

Here is what is needed in January:

Please make sure items have not expired and are unopened. If you have any questions, please call Betty Greer at 630.682.4084.

Blessings to all.

- Canned pasta
- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Soup
- Hamburger, Chicken and Tuna Helper
- Feminine pads—No tampons
- Disposable razors
- Baby wipes
- Shaving cream
- Soap

Congregational Life/Membership News



The 'Membership Life' committee hopes you all had a blessed Christmas season. We hope you were able to spend time with family and friends. We'd like to thank you for participating in the events we hosted and co-hosted this past year. From family movie nights in the sanctuary, to the annual Church Picnic, Trunk or Treat, Easter Egg Hunt and Dinner Nights Out, we've enjoyed building camaraderie among our fellow members and guests.

We are currently planning our event calendar for 2019 and welcome new ideas and suggestions. Also, if you want to join our committee, please contact our chair – Rob Neufelder at rneufelder@ipmcinc.com.

St. Matthew Coffee Hour: We have been pleased with participation in our Sunday coffee hour in 2018. Thanks again to Linnea Karpenske, the Mooks, and the Rudniks for doing set-up, and the small army of folks who volunteer for clean-up each week. If you'd like to participate in this ministry, please contact Wendy Fanning.

-Rob Neufelder



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Children's Ministry



Happy New Year! I wish you a happy, healthy and blessed new year. We had a wonderful 2018 in Children's Ministry and look forward to a new year with fresh ways to learn about God's love.

Thank you to the teachers, shepherds, M&M coordinator, and committee members for sharing your faith, love and time with Children's Ministry this past year. You are a blessing to St. Matthew.

We had a wonderful Advent season, as you can see from the pictures. The M&M partners made gingerbread houses and collected hats, scarves and mittens that they donated to the People's Resource Center.

In Sunday School we learned about the important assignments given to the angels on the first Christmas. We made angel ornaments for the sanctuary Christmas tree, celebrated Jesus' birthday with our church family, and some played the part of singing angels at the 6pm Christmas Eve service. We will be ending our Advent series with a lesson about The Three Kings and the gifts they brought to Jesus.

In our upcoming unit, we are going to backtrack and continue learning about Moses. This past fall the children learned about Moses as a baby, and now they will learn about God's big plan for Moses and why it was important that Moses remain safe as a baby. A variety of workshops will teach about the burning bush and Moses leading his people from their life of slavery in Egypt.

We will learn how God's timing is very different from our timing and how some of God's plans take years to fulfill, which was the case with the plan laid before Moses. We will talk about how we too need patience, faith, and trust when waiting for God to answer our prayers and fulfill His plan for us.

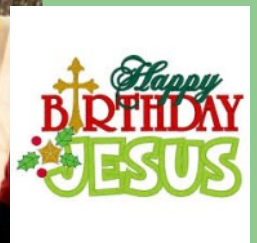


January Birthdays:

13th Charlotte & Cecelia Krasinski
18th Mary Kate Muntz
20th Liam Meyer
24th Anna Muntz



-Susan Wold, Director of Children's Ministry



FAMILY CAMP 2020

Fond Remembrances

This month we are excited to bring you the first in a series of "Fond Remembrances" -- other church members' thoughts on what Family Camp has meant to them. This month's article comes to us from Nancy and Hi Baird.

After making our way through the births of our four children, it had been years since we'd managed a vacation that was more involved than just visiting relatives. But with four young children to wrangle, neither were we up to planning our own adventure. Family Camp beckoned, and despite Nancy's trepidation ("too much big-group togetherness?"), we committed. Now we've attended nearly every Family Camp held since that first journey in 1997.

Both kids and parents, empty-nesters now, have had great experiences every year. There has been plenty of opportunity for our nuclear family to pursue activities on our own, and that's been terrific. But the unpredictable encounters with our extended church family are what we recall with the greatest fondness. Nathan finding a jigsaw-solving kindred soul in Marty Nessel of his grandpa's generation. Colin Kirincich becoming an "honorary Baird" while we drove him back to camp after kayaking – via the T-shirt shop, the 7-eleven for free Slurpees on 7/11, the K-mart... Elijah discovering model rocketry when John Kouns launched rockets at camp. All the kids racing ahead to keep up with Rob, Susan and Anna Neufelder on many hikes, while Hi and Nancy trailed behind. Family Camp has been an unexpected gift that has enriched our lives at camp and continued after returning home. It's like having Christmas in July.

Thank you to the Bairds for sharing a few memories that have helped make Family Camp special to them. Come be a part of this great St. Matthew tradition! The next Family Camp will be July 19th-25th, 2020, at the YMCA of the Rockies, just outside Estes Park, Colorado. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex, and Mark Hutchison would be happy to answer any questions. Find him at 630.639.1448 (call/text), markah22@gmail.com, or at church.



Announcements and Events

NOVEL APPROACHES

The novel to be approached in January is "How to Stop Time" by Matt Haig

Matt Haig has been gifted with a rare ability, which is to make the far-fetched – and even ridiculous – seem believable. "How to Stop Time" will provoke wonder and delight. (The Guardian)

This book is inventive, exciting, moving and bursting with insight about history, time, and what it is to be human. (Kate Williams author of "Becoming Queen Victoria")

The Place: the Mooks', 1523 Surrey Drive, Wheaton

The Date: Friday, January 18th at 7:30pm



ANNUAL MEETING



The St. Matthew UCC Annual Meeting will be held after Worship on Sunday, January 27th.

Annual reports should be submitted to the office by Friday, January 4th.

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Save the date for our annual Feed My Starving Children trip! Mark your calendars for Monday, January 21st, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. We will meet at the church at 1:45pm, and carpool to FMSC to pack food for starving children in countries all over the world. We will pack from 2:30-4:30pm and then carpool back.

If you haven't packed before, it is a great experience and we always love to have new people join us. There are only 40 spots reserved, and the sign-up board is in the narthex. Contact Alex Johnson with questions.



2019 Voice, Happenings and Bulletin Due Dates

All submissions for the weekly Happenings and bulletin should be submitted to the office no later than 9am Wednesday for the week it runs.

2019 VOICE deadlines: Typically the second to last Sunday of the month, with exception of December.

January 20th, February 17th, March 24th, April 21st, May 19th (for June and July), July 21st, August 18th, September 22nd, October 20th, November 17th, December 15th. The Voice is not published in July.



January



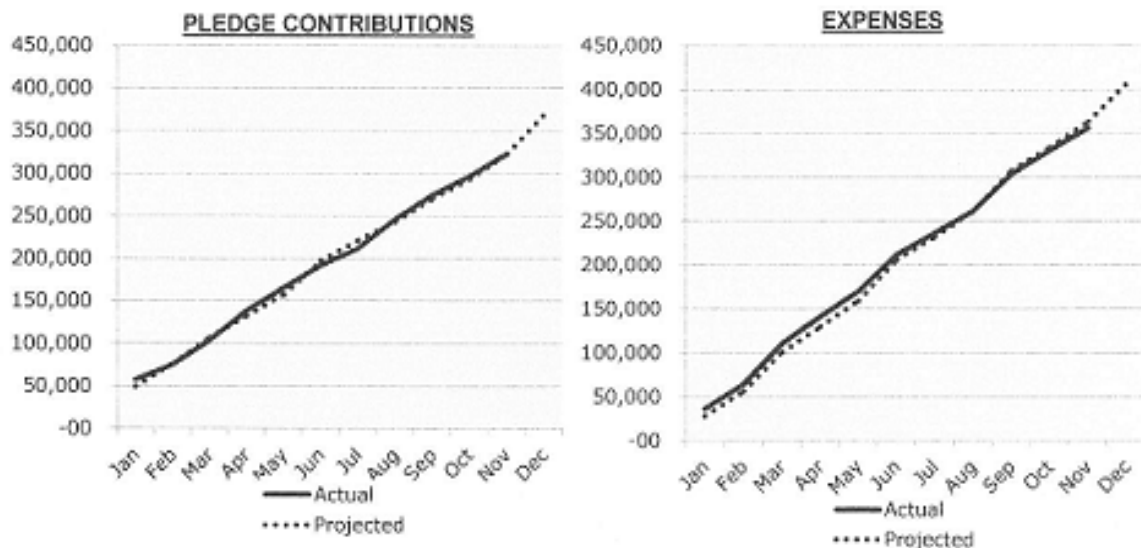
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
TUESDAY NIGHTS 6pm Intergene-Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Ringers	WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 6:30pm Praise Band 7:30pm Sanctuary Choir	1 Happy New Year! 	2	3	4 Annual Reports due to office	5
6 9:30am Worship Communion	7	8	9 PADS	10 1pm Women's Prayer Group	11	12
13 9:30am Worship Bells Remembrance Sunday 11:30am Confirmation meeting	14	15 6pm SRC 7pm Council	16	17 1pm Women's Prayer Group	18 7:30pm Novel Approaches	19
20 9:30am Worship VOICE articles due	21 1:45pm FMSC	22	23	24 1pm Women's Prayer Group	25	26
27 9:30am Worship Open Choir Annual Meeting	28	29	30	31 1pm Women's Prayer Group		

**ST. MATTHEW UCC GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES**

For the Period Ending November 30, 2018

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions	26,752	323,490	370,000
Loose Offerings	660	4,956	4,000
Rental Income	1,000	7,300	9,300
Fund Raising	135	2,884	4,000
Investment Income	44	851	300
More Property	-00	15,000	15,000
Miscellaneous Income	292	7,324	5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	28,883	361,805	407,600
EXPENDITURES:			
Ministry	16,856	199,420	230,855
Building	5,039	101,826	104,580
Loans & Notes	-00	20,063	26,750
Mission / OCWM	3,161	24,954	26,950
Committees:			
Christian Education	201	4,628	8,000
Membership/Congregational Life	81	990	3,000
Music	131	2,567	4,200
Worship	137	1,265	1,500
Memorial/Endowment	-00	600	100
Stewardship	-00	-00	100
Misc. & Contingency	-00	50	1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	25,605	356,364	407,035
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$3,278	\$5,441	\$565

2018 Activity - Actual vs. Projected



Please contact Howard Peterson if you have questions or need additional information.

THE VOICE
OF
St. Matthew
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
1420 South Gables Blvd.
WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189



St. Matthew United Church of Christ
630.665.1236 (Office)

Office Email: office@stmatthewucc.org

Web Site: www.stmatthewucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 10am-2pm

Friday: 9-11am

Sunday Worship: 9:30am

Sunday Church School: 10am

Our Purpose:

Become, Live, and Serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Our Identity:

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome and accepted here at St. Matthew United Church of Christ.

STAFF

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